

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 23, 2009

## **SUPREME COURT APPOINTS FORMER ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR TO SUBCIRCUIT COURT VACANCY IN WILL COUNTY**

The Illinois Supreme Court announced Thursday the appointment of Brian E. Barrett as Circuit Court judge in the 5<sup>th</sup> Subcircuit of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit.

Mr. Barrett is an experienced prosecutor and criminal defense attorney who is a former felony courtroom supervisor in the Will County state's attorneys' office with experience in trying more than 100 criminal cases.

He fills the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Rodney W. Lechwar. Judge William G. McMenamin has been temporarily filling the vacancy. Mr. Barrett's appointment is effective May 27 and terminates in December 2010.

Supreme Court Justice Thomas L. Kilbride recommended Mr. Barrett for appointment after an extensive application and screening process which included review by a special committee of lawyers and non-lawyer community representatives appointed by Justice Kilbride.

Mr. Barrett was an assistant Will County state's attorney for six years before entering the private practice of law in August 2006.

He has worked on cases ranging from DUIs and aggravated traffic offenses to serious felonies. He is among a group of select attorneys in Illinois who are certified to serve as lead counsel in capital cases. Of the 60,594 actively practicing attorneys in the state, only about 600 have received such certification from the Supreme Court.

As an assistant state's attorney, Mr. Barrett supervised a felony courtroom from June 2003 through August 2006.

Since entering private practice with the law firm of Barrett & Sramek, Mr. Barrett's emphasis has been on criminal defense, civil litigation and family practice matters.

Before joining the Will County state's attorney's office, Mr. Barrett served for a short time as assistant corporation counsel for the City of Chicago.

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### **Supreme Court Appoints Barrett Add One**

Mr. Barrett has been active in the Illinois State Bar Association, the Will County Bar Association and the Southwest Bar Association in suburban Chicago.

He received his law degree from Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1999.

Justice Kilbride uses an extensive application, evaluation and interview process to make recommendations for judicial vacancies in the Third Judicial District. In addition to the screening committee, the appointment process used by Justice Kilbride consisted of a written survey of registered attorneys in Will County. The survey was conducted by the Illinois State Bar Association.

Candidates also undergo background security checks with police authorities and with the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission. Justice Kilbride also sought written comments from the public about the candidate.

Twenty-one persons served on the special screening committee. They were: Edward L. Breen, retired president, Will-Grundy Central Trades and Labor Council, who serves as a court bailiff; Glenn C. Fredrickson, retired major, Area I Commander, Illinois State Police; Diane Habiger, property manager, Lincolnshire Properties, Inc.; Charles E. Hanus, president, Will-Grundy Central Trades and Labor Council, AFL-CIO; Kathleen Kinsella, president, Elucidating Business Solutions; Joseph Kirkeeng, executive vice president, Suburban Bank & Trust.

The community representatives also included: Bishop J. E. Moore, pastor, Christ Temple Church of the Apostolic Faith; Ann O'Neill, executive president, Prairie Trail Credit Union; Ana Padron, Regional Office of Education, Will County; J.D. Ross, executive director, Will-Grundy Medical Clinic; Russ Slinkard, president and CEO, Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce; Eveleya U. Washington, materials specialist, president, CBTU; and trustee, IAMAW, Local 851; and Ron Zier, president, Will and Grundy Counties Building Trades Council.

Members of the legal profession on the screening committee were: Retired Justice Tobias G. Barry of the Third District Appellate Court; Chief Judge Gerald R. Kinney of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit; Timothy Bertschy, attorney, former president of the Illinois State Bar Association and a partner at Heyl, Royster, Volker & Allen; Joseph A. Dailing, attorney, executive director, Illinois Coalition for Equal Justice; Chrystel L. Gavlin, an attorney with her own law firm, Chrystel L. Gavlin, P.C., and president, Black Bar Association of Will County; George F. Mahoney III, attorney and partner in the firm of Mahoney, Silverman & Cross; Katherine L. Maloney, attorney, president of the Will County Women's Bar Association and a partner in the firm of Rathbun, Cservenyak and Kozal; and John S. Rossi, attorney, first vice president of the Will County Bar Association and a partner in the firm of McNamara, Phelan, McSteen.

The Third Judicial District comprises 21 counties across the north central part of the state, stretching from Will, Kankakee and Iroquois counties in the east to Whiteside, Rock Island, Peoria, Mercer, Henderson and Hancock counties in the west.

**Court, at 312.793.2323)**